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the influence of the philosophy of Kant and Hegel on critical history as applied to the origins of Christianity.

Apart from the scientific value of the communications that may be expected and which it is to be hoped will be published in a volume, the Congress will undoubtedly prove beneficial in stimulating interest in the historical study of religions at colleges and universities. It is only by recognition of this subject of investigation through the scholastic institutions of this country and Europe that misunderstandings which still prevail as to the purpose and scope of religious investigation can be removed. Next to Political Economy, there is no subject which touches so closely upon living interests as the investigation of religious phenomena, and it seems strange that at American colleges so little has as yet been done toward providing proper instruction in this field and toward furthering researches among those especially qualified for the work. If the Paris Congress realizes the expectations of those who have been instrumental in bringing it about, we may look forward to a more intelligent general interest in the subject and to a larger recognition of it in the college and university curriculum.

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DISCUSSIONS.

THE HISTORY OF FREETHOUGHT.

In Mr. G. P. Gooch's review of "A Short History of Free-thought," in the last number of the JOURNAL, there are some misrepresentations which, I trust, Mr. Gooch would prefer to have corrected. I refer to them with the more regret, because Mr. Gooch has paid the book some very liberal compliments. When a critic does this, his strictures are specially apt to be taken by readers as valid, without inquiry.

1. Mr. Gooch writes: "It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that the most insignificant freethinker bulks larger in the author's vision than the most illustrious supernaturalist." Yet he also writes that "the account of the English Deists presents a much more flattering portrait than that drawn by Mr. Leslie

Stephen." If the latter assertion is true, the former cannot be. The Deists, properly so-called, were all supernaturalists. The whole plan of the book involves the recognition of supernaturalists as "freethinkers" when they apply reason freshly to their problems. And it is the literal fact that most of the men praised in the book were supernaturalists. Thus Mr. Gooch's phrase about "weighing the thoughts of all the ages in a single pair of scales," constitutes a further misrepresentation.

2. By way of discrediting my "discussion of Christianity," Mr. Gooch writes: "The later Roman moralists are contrasted with the Fathers, much to the disadvantage of the latter; but if it was necessary to single out individuals, it seems *scarcely fair to omit such men as Clement, Origen, and Athanasius.*" The contrast to which Mr. Gooch refers is drawn in the chapter entitled "Free-thought in Ancient Rome," and it is avowedly made between pagan writers down to Marcus Aurelius and Latin Christian writers after him, as showing that in the Western Empire the intellectual atmosphere and temper notably worsened. In the next chapter, which is entitled, "Ancient Christianity and its Opponents," and deals specially with the Greek-speaking world, Clement and Origen are repeatedly referred to, and Origen in particular is discussed through several pages with praise of his relative reasonableness. Finally, it is shown that after Origen there is the same kind of deterioration in the Eastern as in the Western Empire. Athanasius is certainly no proof to the contrary. Origen, who represents many pagan philosophic influences, is taken as a Christian high-water mark. No reader of Mr. Gooch's notice could have supposed the possibility of this being the line of statement.

3. More than once Mr. Gooch distorts the purport of a passage by ignoring the context. Any one who will turn to the passage on Omar Khayyam, aspersed by him, will see that what he represents as a gratuitous attack on supernaturalism is a defence of Omar against supernaturalist defamation; and that one of the clauses he cites is a historical statement to the effect that the modern vogue of Omar shows Omar's point of view to be now common. Another clause quoted by Mr. Gooch in this connection is wrested from a totally different context, and the "pouring of contempt" alleged by him is his own fiction.

4. But the most surprising of these manipulations is one in which Mr. Gooch presents in sequence, with marks of elision, as

parts of a continuous argument, a number of sentences of which the *last* occurs on page 408 of the book, and the *first* on page 418. I cannot think that his readers will approve of such a method. In every instance, as it happens, the effect of it is to give a false notion of the position taken up. For instance, the phrase *Ubi Panis, ibi Deus*, which he virtually represents as an attack on priests, is part of a sentence of which the obvious purport is that physicians (and other laymen) are economically coerced. The next sentence runs: "While the priest's bread depends on his creed, the physician's must be similarly implicated." The theory put forward is one of *general* economic causation; and such a theory has as much right to a hearing as Mr. Gooch's doctrine that people who do not feel as he does must be "color-blind."

5. The last misrepresentation on which I shall touch is Mr. Gooch's assertion that: "Scientists who do not share Mr. Robertson's opinions are dismissed as 'clinging to the religion of their nurseries.'" I regret to be forced to protest against this as a bad perversion. The passage quoted from is an argument directed specifically against the common assumption that the mere positing of true beliefs will avail to expel false, without any process of criticism. It proceeds:—

"All modern culture-history proves this to be a fallacy. Even gifted brains can harbor childish errors on the side on which they are undeveloped. *We need not go back to Faraday to find* scientific men clinging to the religion of their nurseries. An eminent mathematician, entirely unqualified in other fields, pays tribute to Paley; and the average church-goer straightway claims that 'science' is with him."

Now, thus to deny Lord Kelvin's competence in *historical* science is not to do what Mr. Gooch says. From many scientific men whose views differ from mine I can dissent without even calling them "color-blind." Mr. Gooch, not content with such characterizations, thinks fit to alter, by garbled quotation, the color of propositions he does not like.

Having taken some trouble, in my time, to protest against the normal unfairness of English reviewing, I am fain to hope that I do not waste time in standing for greater scrupulosity of criticism in a JOURNAL OF ETHICS. In making my protest, I feel bound to avow that the book has shortcomings to which Mr. Gooch has been lenient, and more errors than he specifies. It suffered much from the attempt to make it "short." For some of his suggestions I am thankful.

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